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DIFFUSION
E.J. BRILL
LEIDEN

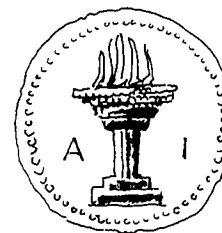
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شوکت پور پشنگ و تیغ عالمگیر او
در همه شهنامها شد داستان انجمن

The glory of the son of Pešang (= Manočehr) and of his world-conquering sword
Became in (the form) of 'books of kings' the (subject of) talk(s)
of the (whole) society.

The symbolic value of the Šāhnāme-heroes: [*Faridun* (450/6, *Afrāsī-yāb* (425/7), *Siyāmak* (399/6) *Zav* (ibid.) and *Siyāvoš* (101/4)] is the same as that of the ancient kings: they illustrate the fragility of the worldly glory. Only the name of *Rostam* (460/4 and as *Tahamtan* 339/5) is used in the sense of a saviour who can bring about a miraculous change of bad fortune, cf. 339/5

شاه ترکان چو پسندید و بچاهم انداخت
دستگیر ار نشود لطف تهنن چکنم

Since it pleased the king of the (beautiful) Turks to throw me into
a well (of love's grief)
What shall I do if the grace of the powerful (*Rostam*) will not be
available (to me)?!

A particularly skilful allusion to a Šāhnāme heroine — the father of *Rostam*, *Zāl*, called also *Dastān* — is found in the play of words in 88/8:

بمهلتي كه سپهرت دهد ز راه مرو
ترا كه گفت كه اين زال ترك دستان كرد

Because of a respite which heaven bestows (sometimes) on you
do not leave the road (of striving):
Who told you that this old hag (= the world, *zāl*) (really) abandoned
her (usual) tale (*dastān*) (of causing pain)?!

This short review of the Old Iranian motifs shows that the pre-Islamic past had for *Hafiz* only an illustrative value and that it formed, on a par with the Koranic allusions and legends from other sources, an easily accessible collection of stereotyped comparisons and metaphors. Thus, the study of these does not belong to the domain of history, but to that of rhetoric — which is also a subject in its own right deserving our attention.

DAVID STRONACH

NOTES ON RELIGION IN IRAN IN THE SEVENTH AND SIXTH CENTURIES B.C.

Pl. LVI-LIX

The writings of Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin have long since placed all students of early Iranian religion in his debt. On a personal note, moreover, I have been grateful for his unfailing interest in new, necessarily often mute, evidence from the field. It may not be out of place therefore, if I take up the subject, within the broader limits of this paper, of the religious setting which saw the foundation, and later the closure, of two religious buildings at the site of Tepe Nush-i Jan.

Tepe Nush-i Jan: Introduction

It may be recalled that the excavations at Tepe Nush-i Jan, located some 60 km. to the south of Hamadan, have revealed the greater part of a compact settlement (Pl. Ia) which appears to have been principally religious in character. In order of construction, the major buildings, which date from ca. 750 to ca. 600 B.C., consist of the Central Temple, the Western Temple, the Fort (Pl. 1b) and the Columned Hall¹.

The Central Temple occupies the summit of the site and is founded directly on bed-rock. At one time this tall, tower-like building must have been a dominant feature in the local landscape. The internal plan of this mudbrick structure included a small antechamber (Pls. IIa and b), a spiral ramp (which provided access to a first floor room over the antechamber as well as to the roof) and a spacious, stepped triangular sanctuary, 11 × 7 m. in size, which rose to the full height of the building (Pl. IIIa).

The altar, which stands within the western bay of the sanctuary, is 85 cm. in height. Its straight-sided socle rises directly from the floor and is surmounted by four outsteps. It has a relatively shallow, hemispherical

¹ For previous reports see especially D. Stronach, 'Excavations at Tepe Nush-i Jan, 1967', *Iran* VII, 1969, pp. 1-20; M. Roaf and D. Stronach, 'Tepe Nush-i Jan, 1970: Second Interim Report', *Iran* XI, 1973, pp. 129-38; D. Stronach, 'La découverte du premier temple mède dans la région d'Ecbatana (Hamadan, Iran)', *CRAI* 1977, pp. 688-700; D. Stronach and M. Roaf, 'Excavations at Tepe Nush-i Jan. Part 1. A Third Interim Report', *Iran* XVI, 1978, hereafter *Iran* XVI, pp. 2-11; and D. Stronach, 'Notes on Median and Early Achaemenian Religious Monuments', *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times* (Ed. E. Biran), Jerusalem, 1981, hereafter *Monuments*, pp. 123-130.

fire bowl set at the middle of its square upper surface (Pl. IIIb) and parts of the sides of the altar still retain one or more layers of hard plaster. The fire bowl itself has a raised plaster rim and a burnt, blackened appearance.

It is of interest that the best analogies for the shape of the altar come from Achaemenid sites of the sixth century and later². Whether or not the shallow depth of the fire bowl was largely determined by the medium of construction, i.e. mud-brick as opposed to stone, it is clear that such an altar could never have accommodated an everlasting fire and that — on this evidence at least — the early fires of Media were not permanent but were rekindled as they were required for each ceremony.

The stepped, lozenge-shaped plan of the Central Temple also appears to illustrate a novel design which owes little to established models in the Near East. If any measure of inspiration may be said to come from contemporary constructions of the eighth century B.C., it would seem to have been derived from the part stone, part mud-brick tower temples of Urartu which were normally sited on high ground³.

The compact Western Temple — the only other building from Tepe Nush-i Jan which is of detailed interest to us in the present context — is distinct from the Central Temple in plan, orientation and height. At the same time, however, the Western Temple may be seen to exhibit a similar set of rooms; an antechamber with a corresponding room above, a spiral ramp, and an inner cella with what would appear to be the truncated remains of a mud-brick altar, again located to the left of the entrance (Pl. IVa)⁴.

As our recent work has indicated, the active life of these two buildings was cut short while they were still in sound repair. Within the sanctuary of the Central Temple the altar was surrounded by mud-bricks and shale in such a way that no harm could come to it, and then the rest of the building was filled with shale chips up to a height of 6 m. — again with evident care that no damage should be done either to the deeply recessed blind windows or to any other major feature. Finally, this mass of stone was capped, first, by alternate layers of shale and mud and, secondly, by several courses of mud-brick.

² Cf. D. Stronach, *Pasargadae. A Report on the excavations conducted by the British Institute of Persian Studies from 1961 to 1963*, Oxford, 1978, hereafter *Pasargadae*, pl. 107 and fig. 72.

³ D. Stronach, 'Urartian and Achaemenian Tower Temples', *JNES* 26, 1967, pp. 278 f.

⁴ *Iran* XVI, fig. 2.

In the case of the Western Temple no attempt was made to introduce a similar internal blocking. There were unmistakable indications, however, of a formal process of closure. The lower half of the doorway leading into the cella was blocked with mud-bricks; a thick layer of white plaster was then applied to both the floor of the cella and to part of the inner face of the secondary brickwork in the doorway (Pl. IVb): and, as a comprehensive third measure, the last available entrance to the temple was bricked up and plastered over in such a way that nothing could be seen of it from the outside.

The Interpretation of R. Ghirshman

In the absence of any inscriptions from Tepe Nush-i Jan, or indeed from early Media as a whole, it is of course far from easy to say how this mute evidence should be interpreted. One recent attempt to place the known data in a firm religious context is owed to the late Roman Ghirshman. In his view⁵ it was possible to see a direct, causal relationship between the Daiva inscription, which can be ascribed to the first year or two of Xerxes' reign (486-465 B.C.), and the unusual measures visited on the Central Temple at Tepe Nush-i Jan⁶.

According to this reconstruction the sanctuary came to be 'condemned' and 'desacralised'. Further, Ghirshman associated this presumed 'daivadāna' with the gods of the old Iranian pantheon⁷ and argued that the structure could have been closed in order to make way for new open-air terraces dedicated to the worship of Ahuramazda⁸.

⁵ R. Ghirshman, *Terrasses sacrées de Bard-è Néchandeh et Masjid-i Solaiman I*, Paris, 1976, hereafter *Terrasses sacrées*, pp. 174-75; IDEM, 'Les Daivadāna', *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* XXIV, 1976, pp. 3-14; idem, notes offered in D. Stronach, *CRAI* 1977, pp. 698-700; and idem, 'La religion de l'Iran du VIII^e siècle avant notre ère à l'Islam', *Le Plateau Iranien et l'Asie Centrale des origines à la conquête islamique: leurs relations à la lumière des documents archéologiques*, Paris, 1977, p. 344.

⁶ Here it will serve to quote only paragraphs 4a and 4b of the Daiva inscription. 'Saith Xerxes the King: When that I became king, there is among these countries inscribed above (one which) was in commotion. Afterwards Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favour of Ahuramazda I smote that country and put it down in its place.

'And among these countries there was (a place) where previously false gods were worshipped. Afterwards, by the favour of Ahuramazda, I destroyed that sanctuary of the demons, and I made proclamation, "The demons shall not be worshipped!" Where previously the demons were worshipped, there I worshipped Ahuramazda and Arta reverently.' (R.G. Kent, *Old Persian, Grammar, Texts, Lexicon*, New Haven, 1953, p. 151.)

⁷ *Terrasses sacrées*, p. 175.

⁸ As it happens, the surface above the sealed building failed to provide any indication of further construction.

Ghirshman's parallel assertion that all these events took place after the accession of Xerxes in 486 B.C., i.e. at a moment far removed from the late seventh century date which has been proposed for the closure of the temples, is one which it will be as well to review at once. Without greater elaboration in these pages, it may be enough to point out that even the 'squatter occupation' at Tepe Nush-i Jan (which is thought to have lasted for about fifty years *after* the abandonment of the temples)⁹ has not yielded any material which could be described as Achaemenid.

It is apparent in other words that the excavated evidence that has helped to place the formal sealing of the Central Temple no later than 600 B.C.¹⁰ has been overlooked in favour of a single, admittedly bold theory. In this interpretation it is assumed, first, that Xerxes, who found it necessary to take stern measures in Egypt soon after his accession¹¹, was also faced with a more or less immediate revolt in Media; second, that the still unreformed temples of Media constituted a pole of attraction for the latent nationalism of the Medes; and third, that Xerxes moved against the traditional faith of the Median populace as part of an ambitious design that was intended to secure the supreme position of Ahuramazda throughout western Iran and, by the same token, a lasting fusion between the Median and Persian people¹².

Each of these last assumptions rests on questionable evidence at best. There are widely divergent views as to the identity of the country referred to by Xerxes in the Daiva inscription and, if anything, there is considerable evidence to suggest that it was not Media. In terms of the account of Herodotus, for example, we learn of a Median revolt against Darius¹³ but nothing of any Median rising against Xerxes in the brief, critical period before the latter's invasion of Greece¹⁴; indeed numerous references point to the prominent place of Median combatants in Xerxes' forces¹⁵. Also, as far as chronology alone is concerned, it must be stressed once again that, whether or not a propagandist would have found it proper to say that the Nush-i Jan temples were 'destroyed', the careful closure of these two structures had nothing to do with any sequence of events in the fifth century B.C.

⁹ Cf. *Iran* XVI, table on p. 10.

¹⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 10-11 and D. Stronach, *Iran* VII, 1969, p. 16.

¹¹ Herod. vii. 7.

¹² *Terrasses sacrées*, loc. cit.

¹³ Herod. i. 130.

¹⁴ Cf. Herod. vii. 7.

¹⁵ Herod. vii. 62, 86, 184, 210, 211.

At this point we must address certain wider issues if we are to progress further.

The date of Zoroaster

In a number of recent studies Mary Boyce has suggested that the date of the prophet Zoroaster should be placed within the second millennium B.C., either between 1400 and 1000 B.C.¹⁶, between 1700 and 1500 B.C.¹⁷ or before 1200 B.C.¹⁸ Such figures offer alternatives to W.B. Henning's advocacy of a much lower date for Zoroaster stretching well into the sixth century B.C. (a date chiefly supported by the 'traditional date' for Zoroaster which was said to fall 258 years before Alexander)¹⁹ and they remind us of the need to re-explore the chronological hints preserved in the language and social imagery of the *Gathas* themselves. It is beyond the scope of this paper to say more on the latter score, but it is at least the stand of the present writer that the chronological inhibitions once posed by the 'traditional date' no longer hold²⁰. It is not necessary in other words to place Zoroaster in the milieu of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. — and by this same token many issues associated with this last period will deserve fresh scrutiny.

The accession of Darius I

Darius by his own admission was clearly not next in line for the Achaemenid kingship, but being an opportunist he appears to have made his successful bid for the throne in the period which followed the untimely death of Cambyses II (530-522 B.C.)²¹.

¹⁶ M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism* I (Handbuch der Orientalistik. 1 Abteilung: Der Nahe und der Mittlere Osten. VIII Band: Religion. 1 Abschnitt: Religionsgeschichte des Alten Orients. Lieferung 2, Heft 2A), Leiden/Köln, 1975, hereafter *HZ* I, pp. 3 and 190.

¹⁷ M. Boyce, *Zoroastrians: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, London, 1979, p. 2.

¹⁸ M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism* II, Leiden/Köln, 1982, hereafter *HZ* II, p. 3.

¹⁹ See W.B. Henning, *Zoroaster, Politician or Witch-Doctor?* (Ratanbai Katrak lectures), Oxford, 1951, p. 41.

²⁰ See also Sh. Shahbazi, 'The Traditional Date of Zoroaster Explained', *BSOAS* XI, 1977, pp. 25 f.

²¹ See, among others who have explored the inconsistencies in Darius' own account of the events that led to his accession, A. T. Olmstead, 'Darius and his Behistun inscription' *AJSL*, LV, 1938, pp. 392-416, *idem*, *History of the Persian Empire*, Chicago, 1948, pp. 108 f., M. A. Dandamaev, *Persien unter den ersten Achämeniden* (6 Jahrhundert v. Chr.), Wiesbaden, 1976, hereafter *Persien*, pp. 108 f., E. J. Bickerman and H. Tadmor, 'Darius I, Pseudo-Smerdis and the Magi', *Athenaeum* N.S. LVI, 1978, pp. 239-61 and M. Boyce *HZ* II, pp. 78 f.

Of special interest is the nature of the justification offered by Darius to account for his seizure of the throne. In most usurpations the conflict is one between near relatives and, at the end, the usurper is able to cite the high standing of his immediate parentage. This was hardly the case where Darius was concerned. Neither his father, Hystaspes, nor his grandfather, Arsames, nor even his great grandfather, Ariaramnes, had ruled the Persians. Thus the claims of his patrimony could be advanced only in the most general terms²².

In the opening passages of the Bisitun inscription it is clear that Darius seeks to impress; but, as someone who was surely known by many to be no more than a third cousin of the deceased king, he was also suitably obscure: 'From long ago our family had been kings ... VIII of our family (there are) who were kings afore; I am the ninth; IX in succession we have been kings'²³. The erstwhile 'kingship' of Arsames and Ariaramnes is implied but not spelt out. In short, the phrases used by Darius were designed to support the one indisputable genealogical point in his favour: his known and accepted position as a member of the Achaemenid family.

The obvious recourse for the new ruler was to invoke that most favoured of justifications for usurpation, a divine call²⁴. Accordingly we not only learn in the Bisitun text that the selection of Darius as king was ordained by Ahuramazda²⁵, but within the five columns of the inscription we find 'the will of Ahuramazda' cited more than thirty-five times.

Such repeated invocations of the name of Ahuramazda have helped in part to fortify the view that Darius was the first Achaemenid monarch to embrace the faith proclaimed by Zoroaster²⁶. If it should be correct, however, to allow that Darius was indeed a usurper and that Zoroaster

²² It is time to abandon completely, I believe, the supposition that the line of Darius, the so-called junior branch of the royal house, ever shared power and territorial dominion, from ca. 640 to ca. 559 B.C., with the line of Cyrus. The fact that Parsumaš and Parsa represent alternative names of Persian origin for the former Elamite land of Anšan (cf. D. Stronach, 'Achaemenid Village I at Susa and the Persian Migration to Fars', *Iraq* XXXVI, 1974, p. 248 and *Pasargadae*, p. 284) is enough in itself to discredit any claims to early kingship in Parsa on behalf of Ariaramnes and Arsames. Cf. also Kent, op. cit., p. 12 and *Persien*, pp. 32 f.

²³ DB + 3 and § 4.

²⁴ Cf. E. J. Bickerman and H. Tadmor, op. cit., p. 244.

²⁵ DB § 5.

²⁶ See for example I. Gershevitch, 'Zoroaster's Own Contribution', *JNES* 23, 1964, pp. 16 f., J. Duchesne-Guillemin, 'Le Dieu de Cyrus', *Acta Iranica* 3, 1974, pp. 17-18 and *Pasargadae*, p. 145.

was separated from this monarch by very much more than a few decades, other possibilities have to be considered. It is not only difficult, for example, to suppose that Darius, beset by every kind of political obstacle, would have sought to legitimize his rule by appealing to the will of a god whose authority had *not* been widely accepted beforehand, but there is evidence, in the Bisitun text itself, to suggest that a good part of Darius' audience would have found little of surprise in his more pious pronouncements.

On the one hand we witness the evident insecurity with which the new king asks his audience to believe in his deeds: 'Thou who shalt hereafter read this inscription, let that which has been done by me convince thee; do not think it a lie'²⁷. On the other hand we find the name of Ahuramazda called upon with perfect assurance. Threats are issued and rewards are promised in the name of Ahuramazda²⁸. Certain Elamites are named as hostile subjects among whom Ahuramazda was not worshipped²⁹ and Darius, in recounting a no doubt mythical misdeed of his chief rival³⁰, claims to have restored the sanctuaries which Gaumata the Magian had 'destroyed'³¹. In other words, the embattled monarch more than half expected his subjects to question the veracity of his official history, but he did not expect them to question either the position of his god or the merit that was due to him for such deeds as 'restoring' the *āyadana* and chastising those of his subjects who had combined (it would seem) religious with political dissent.

Further confirmation of the already established position of Ahuramazda, presumably not only in Persia but probably also in Media, comes from the Elamite version of the Bisitun inscription where the text defines Ahuramazda as 'the god of the Iranians'³². This statement is all the more valuable in that it cannot have formed part of the illiterate king's dictated message; rather, it would seem reasonable to regard it as the objective gloss of an Elamite scribe³³.

²⁷ DB § 56.

²⁸ DB § 66 and § 67. Cf. also DB § 57.

²⁹ DB § 72.

³⁰ Cf. E. J. Bickerman and H. Tadmor, op. cit., pp. 241-42.

³¹ DB § 14.

³² DB § 62.

³³ On the very significant role played by the Elamite scribes of this time — a role which might help to explain the liberty just noticed — see I. Gershevitch's Preface to R. T. Hallock, 'The Evidence of the Persepolis Tablets', *Cambridge History of Iran II*, 1971, pp. 3 f.

Belief and practice in Fars

Before we turn to the nature of Darius' beliefs it may be useful to glance at the general state of religion in Fars during the period of Darius' reign, notably as the subject is illustrated by the Persepolis fortification texts³⁴.

The texts not only refer to Ahuramazda and Mithra, to such natural phenomena as rivers and a mountain, and to other gods unknown, but also to the Elamite gods, Humban, Šimut and Adad³⁵. It is true that Ahuramazda is always mentioned first in any list of gods³⁶ but this appears to be his only unique privilege. The provisions reserved for his cult appear to be smaller than those reserved for the cult of Humban and in fact Iranian gods are mentioned less often than Elamite ones. As Hallock has observed, 'the economic administration treated the gods equally'³⁷.

The character of the local priesthood also calls for notice. The texts provide the Elamite term for a priest, *šatin* as well as the Iranian term *makuš*³⁸. Certain of the *šatins* bear names such as Mardunuya ('Mardonius')³⁹ which are undoubtedly Persian, while certain of the Magi bear names that could well be Median⁴⁰; but at the same time much of the information to be drawn from the names of such individuals still remains to be explored⁴¹.

The religious duties of such officials provide further insights. Two of the *šatins* with Persian names, Mardunuya and Gaubaruva ('Gobryas')⁴² offer libations to Humban and Adad respectively⁴³ — a circumstance which must in some way reflect the already lengthy period

³⁴ The texts date from between 509 and 494 B.C. R. T. Hallock, *Persepolis Fortification Tablets*, Chicago, 1969, hereafter *PFT*, p. 1.

³⁵ The last Semitic god is known to have been adopted by the Elamites. Cf. M. Dandamaev, 'La Politique Religieuse des Achéménides', *Acta Iranica* 4, 1975, hereafter *Acta Iranica* 4, p. 196.

³⁶ *PFT*, PF 337-39.

³⁷ *PFT*, p. 5.

³⁸ *PFT*, pp. 723 and 755.

³⁹ *PFT*, p. 725.

⁴⁰ Cf. *PFT* PF 769. I am indebted to Professor Richard Frye for this observation.

⁴¹ For the Old Iranian names represented in the texts, see, apart from *PFT*, M. Mayrhofer, *Onomastica Persepolitana, Das Altiranische Namengut der Persepolis-Täfelchen*, Wien, 1973. A more recently available study is: Heidemarie Koch, *Die religiösen Verhältnisse der Dareioszeit. Untersuchungen an Hand der elamischen persepolitistäfelchen*, Göttingen Orient-Forschungen Serie III, Band IV, Wiesbaden, 1977.

⁴² *PFT*, p. 707.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, PF 348 and 353.

of interaction between the Persian and Elamite populations of Fars⁴⁴. It is apparent too that the duties of the *šatins* and the Magi were not entirely distinct. Both could honour Mithra, both could perform the *lan* ceremony⁴⁵ and both could make offerings to rivers⁴⁶.

On the evidence of these economic texts, then, an intriguingly fluid and relaxed religious climate prevailed in the Persian homeland in early Achaemenid times⁴⁷.

The Religion of Darius

Hints that Darius himself found it possible — in keeping with the henotheistic condition of much of the ancient Near East — to assert his belief in a single god without believing him to be the only god are contained, of course, in his own inscriptions. Thus when Ahuramazda was duly labelled as 'the god of the Iranians'⁴⁸, immediately before Darius' reference to 'the other gods who are'⁴⁹ the Elamite scribe was in effect defining the 'other gods' as non-Iranian gods⁵⁰. Indeed, while it will always be problematic for us to distinguish the effects of *belief* from those of *policy*, we can at least imagine that it would have been difficult for any invader to enter the portals of Babylon or Memphis without feeling that the local dieties of Babylonia and Egypt could exist and have power. In such circumstances — circumstances of novel conquest and expansion — it no doubt seemed best to Cyrus, Cambyases, Darius and even Xerxes⁵¹ to honour the local gods according to local custom⁵².

⁴⁴ Cf. *Acta Iranica* 4, p. 196.

⁴⁵ *PFT*, PF 1955-57.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, PF 339 and 1955.

⁴⁷ On this premise, as well as on other points mentioned in this section, see now the careful assessment given in *HZ* II, PP. 133 f. where the nature of the religious matter contained in the tablets is seen to offer a significant, if sometimes also perplexing, supplement to the measured pronouncements in the royal inscriptions.

⁴⁸ See note 32 above.

⁴⁹ DB §62.

⁵⁰ Cf. I. Gershevitch, *JNES* 23, p. 17. The only reasonable alternative explanation of the phrase 'the other gods who are' depends on an assumption that the original Persian wording was prompted by Zoroaster's definition of the *Ameša Spentas* as 'Entities' and on a second assumption that this message would have stood outside the comprehension of the Elamite translator (*ibid.*, pp. 17-18). With our enhanced knowledge, however, of both the comprehensive role that was played by such translators (note 33, above) and of the profound interplay of Elamite and Persian elements in the sixth century Achaemenid world, this particular view of the possibilities begins to look less compelling.

⁵¹ Cf. Herod. viii. 54.

⁵² Cf. *Acta Iranica* 4, p. 198.

Of equal interest (or perhaps still greater interest in an Iranian context) is Darius' prayer addressed, in one of his inscriptions from Persepolis, to Ahuramazda 'together with all the gods'⁵³. The very nature of this prayer, offered at the physical and spiritual heart of the empire, suggests an appeal to more than one home divinity. For one brief moment we do not seem to be too far removed from the almost jostling local deities named in the Persepolis tablets⁵⁴.

We are confronted nonetheless with Darius' use of phrases, used to express the precepts and principles by which he wished to be known⁵⁵, which would seem to point to the direct influence of Zoroaster's message. It is true that the use of certain of these phrases by say, one of the vassal kings of the once remote region of Parsa might still leave us wondering if they could be owed to a stock of pre-Zoroastrian lore, common to both East and West Iranians from a very ancient time, but it is surely less likely (and we can only deal in probabilities) that Darius, or indeed Cyrus the Great, as direct rulers of the East Iranian world, would only have had access to such a store of time-honoured maxims.

It is Boyce's thesis, if I have understood it aright, that the Achaemenids, from Cyrus onwards, made a *commitment* to the Zoroastrian faith, however far it may have been honoured in the breach or only observed, as Moorey has concluded from a study of the forms of worship and ritual found on Achaemenid seals, 'by a small minority within the Empire'⁵⁶. In searching for a workable definition that meets the conditions it may be useful therefore to think of Darius, and no doubt the two monarchs who preceded him, Cyrus and Cambyses, as 'nominal Zoroastrians'⁵⁷. Cyrus and Darius were in addition eminently pragmatic rulers; and, faced with unique imperial horizons — horizons far removed from the pastoral world of the prophet Zoroaster — the solutions that

⁵³ DPd 14, 22, 24.

⁵⁴ Or even to the simultaneous invocations to Ahuramazda, Anahita and Mithra in the inscriptions of Artaxerxes II. On the absence of the name of Anahita in the Persepolis fortification texts, and the danger of drawing too heavily on the *argumentum e silentio*, see R. N. Frye, 'Mithra in Iranian History', *Mithraic Studies* 1, 1971, p. 63. Note also in this context Cyrus' supposed consecration of a day of victory over the Sacae to 'the goddess of his fathers'. Strabo, xi.8.5.

⁵⁵ Let alone his use of 'certain orthodox words of worship for Ahuramazda'. *HZ* II, p. 116.

⁵⁶ P. R. S. Moorey, 'Aspects of Worship and Ritual on Achaemenid Seals', *Actes des VII Internationalen Kongresses für Iranische Kunst und Archäologie, München 7-10, September 1976, Berlin, 1979*, p. 225.

⁵⁷ On the possible echoes of the Gathas already present in II Isaiah, see Morton Smith, 'II Isaiah and the Persians', *JAOS* 83, 1963, pp. 419 f.

they sought and found would seem to have been governed, in not a few instances, by elements that have not in the main been sufficiently acknowledged, namely an awareness of Mesopotamian tradition⁵⁸ and, I would add, a regard for the Elamite legacy to which the Achaemenids also fell heir.

The Medes

Just how far either the native beliefs of the Medes, or indeed the forms of Median government, may also be said to have influenced the Achaemenids is still in many ways an open question. Earlier perceptions of an evolved Median polity dating back to the eighth century B.C. have been shown to be misguided⁵⁹. And while the success of the western campaigns of Cyaxares, apparently the first ruler of a united Media, should point to a parallel degree of expansion toward the East, none of the eastern conquests of this vigorous figure are likely to date to a period much before 615 B.C.⁶⁰. It is true of course that the Median homeland, lying athwart the main east-west trade route through Upper Asia, could have received intimations of the message of Zoroaster long before the advent of Cyaxares. Whether or not it did so, however, is by no means certain.

Tepe Nush-i Jan Conclusions

At a time when our perceptions of the early Achaemenid world of Cyrus the Great and his immediate successors are still changing, or being refined in significant ways, it is still more difficult to posit absolute positions with regard to either the political organization or the religious condition of the land of Media before 550 B.C. Archaeological excavation has done much to add to our knowledge; but the still surprisingly meagre condition of that knowledge deserves to be emphasised.

With reference to Tepe Nush-i Jan itself, several items of record may be kept in mind. We may note:

- 1) that the austere Central Temple was founded, very possibly together with the smaller Western Temple, *ca.* 750 B.C.;
- 2) that both buildings were taken out of use at some date approaching 600 B.C.;

⁵⁸ Cf. *Acta Iranica* 4, p. 198 and *Persien*, pp. 76 and 85-8; also P. R. S. Moorey, *op. cit.*, p. 218 f.

⁵⁹ See, for example, P. R. Helm, 'Heredotus' *Mēdikos Logos* and Median History', *Iran* XIX, 1981, pp. 85-90.

⁶⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 87.

- 3) that the manner in which the two structures can be seen to have been closed was nothing less than respectful;
- 4) that there is no sign of any subsequent revival of religious life at the site; and
- 5) that the stepped altar, as well as certain of the inner and outer decorative motifs on the walls of the Central Temple, can be said to find echoes of a more or less close kind in the subsequent Achaemenid period⁶¹.

Details of this nature may be read in different ways. In one possible interpretation we could be dealing with a site of 'high' religious quality which is to be linked in some way with the interest shown in Ahuramazda in western Iran from at least the sixth century B.C. onwards⁶². (In this event the closure of the Central Temple would not so much reflect a change in religious loyalties as a change in local perceptions of the manner in which it was appropriate to offer worship, i.e., no longer in a temple — as in adjacent Urartu or Mesopotamia — but perhaps, as in eastern Iran, at the domestic hearth or under the open sky.) Alternatively, the presence of at least one towering temple-building (not to mention the addition of a second structure which may have been designed to honour a separate divinity) could point to the extent to which Median religion in the eighth and seventh centuries had come to be influenced (at least in isolated instances) by alien, non-Iranian beliefs⁶³. Finally, if we are not witness to a moment of religious upheaval near the end of the seventh century B.C. (and the care with which the Central Temple was interred does not accord easily with such an interpretation), there remains the possibility that some secular decision, conceivably related to the growth of central authority in Media, is to be associated with the abandonment of the site, at least in its monumental state.

At all events we stand intrigued; and rather than rush to conclusions against a still obscure background of local belief — and even local political reality — we should perhaps be content that a modicum of concrete evidence from pre-Achaemenid Media remains to take its place within the context of future assessments.

⁶¹ See *Monuments*, p. 128 and pl. 14. Note also the deep blind windows which constitute such a striking motif in both the Zendan at Pasargadae and the Kābah-i Zardusht at Naqsh-e Rostam.

⁶² On the possible early enhancement of Ahuramazda's position in western Iran, see *HZ* II, p. 28. On the novel step of elevating a fire which could then be used exclusively 'as an icon for prayer', see also *ibid.*, p. 53.

⁶³ Cf. *HZ* II, p. 37. Ghirshman's thesis that Tepe Nush-e Jan once served as a place of worship for the gods of the old Iranian pantheon (see note 7 above) is also not to be entirely counted out of hand at this stage — even it can only be given consideration for the period ca. 750-600 B.C.

EIN WEITERES FRAGMENT AUS MANIS GIGANTENBUCH

Bruchstücke des Gigantenbuches, einer der kanonischen Schriften Manis, wurden von W.B. Henning 1943 zusammengestellt, veröffentlicht und kommentiert¹. Damals wußte man von den literarischen Quellen und gedanklichen Hintergründen dieses Werkes kaum mehr, als daß es dem Kreis der jüdisch-apokryphen Henoch-Schriften entstammte und mit dem »Buch der Wächter« manche Einzelheit gemein hatte. Die Existenz eines vormanichäischen »Gigantenbuches« (Γραφή τῶν Γυγάντων) war dem Namen nach bekannt. P. Alfarc identifiziert dieses Werk mit dem *Liber de Ogia nomine gigante*, über dessen Inhalt das *Decretum Gelasianum* einen Satz mitteilt².

Heute haben die Textfunde vom Toten Meer zu einer völlig neuen Situation geführt. Nicht nur waren unter den Fragmenten der Qumrān-Höhle 4 zahlreiche Bruchstücke des Astronomischen Buches, des Buches der Wächter, der Träume und der Epistel Henochs, auch Reste von sechs Exemplaren einer Schrift konnten identifiziert werden, die in christlichen Versionen der Henochliteratur keine Entsprechung haben und die J. T. Milik als Teil des aramäisch geschriebenen jüdischen Gigantenbuches bestimmt hat³, jener Schrift also, der Manis Gigantenbuch am nächsten gestanden haben muß. Aus Textvergleichen einiger manichäischer und jüdischer Fragmente folgt dies ebenso⁴ wie aus der engen Verwandtschaft solcher Namen wie aram. 'hy', hhyh = mp., parth. 'hy', soghd. 'xy', aram. 'why', 'whyh' = mp., parth. 'why', soghd. [wx]y', aram. mhw'y = mp. m'hw'y, soghd. m'h'wy, aram. hwbbs' = mp. hwb'byš. Milik schließt daraus, daß Manis Gigantenbuch sehr getreu dem jüdischen Vorbild folgte: »Il (= Mani) se contenta d'une adaptation qui me paraît assez peu poussée: parfois une traduction presque

¹ The Book of the Giants, BSOAS 11 [1943], 52-74.

² E. v. Dobschütz (Ed.), Das Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis, Leipzig 1912, S. 54.

³ J. T. Milik, Turfan et Qumran. Livre des Géants juif et manichéen, in: Tradition und Glaube, Festgabe K.G. Kuhn zum 65. Geburtstag, ed. G. Jeremias, H.W. Kuhn, H. Stegemann, Göttingen 1971, 117ff. Ders., The Book of Enoch. Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4, Oxford 1976.

⁴ Vgl. Anm. 3, Titel 2, 300ff., 334f.